



Board of Commissioners

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June 30, 2023

Statement Concerning Local Transmission of Malaria in Florida

The [Centers for Disease Control](#) and the [Florida Department of Health](#) have both issued a mosquito-borne illness advisory for all of Florida, after four (4) confirmed cases of locally acquired malaria have been found in Sarasota County.

While malaria is a very serious disease and the genus of mosquitoes (*Anopheles*) that vectors the parasite that causes malaria is found throughout Florida, there is no cause for alarm. The East Flagler Mosquito Control District (District) works year-round to suppress the 48 species of mosquitoes that inhabit Flagler County in order to prevent any outbreak of mosquito-borne disease. The District monitors mosquito populations daily via a network of traps and landing rate count stations, allowing the District to respond quickly when there are increases in mosquito populations. The District's helicopter and fleet of fog trucks are able to quickly reduce flying biting mosquitoes throughout our boundaries as soon as an increase in mosquitoes is registered by surveillance. Reducing the mosquito population to low numbers is key to preventing the spread of any mosquito-borne disease by reducing the contact between mosquitoes and humans.

While some species of mosquitoes can fly up to 20 miles, the *Anopheles* mosquito does not fly far, only about a mile. This mosquito inhabits swamps and is active primarily between dusk and dawn. Because of the limited flight range of this mosquito, the threat of local malaria spread is primarily by infected humans traveling to Flagler County. Mosquito-borne diseases represent an ongoing threat, as in where international travelers may return from abroad infected with a mosquito-borne disease such as malaria. Public health officials monitor for disease among international travelers and will expand those monitoring efforts to non-international travelers. At the District, we will continue to monitor the population of mosquitoes to keep them low and prevent the spread of all mosquito-borne diseases, as has been our mission for the past 70 years here in Flagler County. The District was founded in 1952 and operates as a single purpose local government agency run by an elected board independent of the County and City governments.

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